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[Gray, Francis Calley]  
Letter to Governor Lincoln,  
in relation to Harvard University.







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LETTER

TO

[Gray, Francis, 1811-1872]

MR. GRAY'S LETTER

TO

GOVERNOR LINCOLN

ON

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



Edith  
Hammond  
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[Gray, Frances Colby]



LETTER

TO

GOVERNOR LINCOLN,

IN RELATION TO

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

BOSTON

FROM HALE'S STEAM-POWER-PRESS

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TO HIS EXCELLENCY

L E V I L I N C O L N ,

GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS.

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SIR,—The various reports, to the disadvantage of Harvard University, which are always circulating among us, have been recently urged with so much zeal and vigor, and such an appearance of uniform and organised effort, that some of its friends are apprehensive, lest these attacks, keeping each other in countenance by their noise and their numbers, and making up in activity what they want in strength, may impair the credit or diminish the usefulness of the Institution, if they remain any longer unanswered. Yielding reluctantly to the wishes of these friends, I have at length determined to answer such of the reports in question as I have heard and can comprehend. This letter is addressed to you, Sir, because, as Governor of the Commonwealth, you preside over the Board of Overseers, and therefore it seemed not improper that it should be so ; and because your name may give it some consequence, and thus occasion it to be more extensively read. It is written without consulting any other member of the Corporation. It is written without fear for the cause, which will triumph as soon as it is understood. It is written without anxiety ; for

all these clamors seem to me a good omen ; they show that the enemies of the College are alarmed ; and at what are they alarmed but at the apprehension of its prosperity ? Having a higher opinion of their sagacity than of their fairness, I rejoice in their fears.

I disclaim all attacks on the personal character of any individual, or of any class, party, or sect. It is no uncommon thing to respect a man and not his arguments ; or to respect the arguments and not the man. In speaking, therefore, of the arguments or pretensions advanced by any man or set of men, either in their own behalf, or in that of others, it is my intention to say what I think of the arguments and pretensions themselves, without the slightest reference to the private characters of those, by whom or in whose behalf they are urged. By the term enemies of the College, I do not mean any particular sect or party, for I know none, which allows any man to call it so ; but I mean those, of whatever party or sect, who are united in hostility to the Institution. Nor do I apply this term to all, who have made complaints against the College. No doubt many of its friends have been deceived, and join in these calls for information from a sincere desire to see its government properly administered. If any of the objections which I shall answer have been made both by friends and by enemies, the former will understand me as answering them in the spirit of friendship. But the tone, in which some of these calls are made does not please me, I do not admit the absolute right of anonymous writers to make any such call. What claim have they to any

control over the College, or to any explanation of its affairs? An exact scrutiny by the proper authority into all our public institutions is right; but positive assertions without knowledge, charges without inquiry, and condemnation without proof or hearing, are not right. And is this the proper authority? We have been told, indeed, that these demands upon us are made by the Public. But surely every anonymous writer in the newspaper cannot call himself the Public, and make claims upon us in that capacity. At least we may say, 'come out and show us what sort of a Public you are.' I have no desire to call them out, Sir, nor any care about it; but till they do come out, I say they have no right to make such claims.

The State, it is said, founded the College, and therefore has a right of visitation over it. But then who is the State? Surely not every person in it. And what is the right of visitation? Is it an arbitrary right to question, control, and punish at pleasure; or is it a legal right to be exercised according to the forms and principles of law and equity? How is it exercised in England, from which we derive the right itself, and the form of all our judicial tribunals. Does even the King himself exercise it personally? Not at all. The proper tribunal causes all parties in interest to appear before it, and after fair notice and full hearing, and deliberate consideration, does unto them what to law and justice may be found to appertain. And if Massachusetts should see fit to exercise a similar power, she would undoubtedly exercise it through the

agency of the proper tribunal. It may be questioned whether she has not already established such a tribunal in the Board of Overseers, and delegated to them this power of visitation. If it be so, the power is exercised every day. But if not, if she still retains a right of visitation above and beyond the Overseers, how would she exercise it? She would do what she has always heretofore done when she wanted to exercise equity powers without a Court of Equity; she would enable her Supreme Judicial Court to determine the case according to the principles of right and justice. At any rate she would do what should be fit and proper. I have no fear that she will let her power be used as an instrument of injustice by our enemies. If she comes in her might, she will come in her dignity and her righteousness also, and will not smite us right or wrong at their bidding. I feel not the least alarm at the intimation, that they can wield the power of the State against the College to its ruin, and that they are determined to do so. I doubt whether they understand the temper of the People of Massachusetts.

So much for their pretensions to the right and the power of controlling the College. Now for a few of their complaints. The first and most frequent is, that there are not so many students in Cambridge as in some other Colleges. What then? There is no Institution in New-England or in America, in which the morals and manners of youth are more carefully or more successfully guarded and improved; none in which they can now obtain, I say it boldly and with-

out disparagement or disrespect of others, an education nearly so complete; and we are every year doing something to make it still better. It is indeed for this precise purpose that we are committing another of our sins; that of laying up a little money to this end. What more can we do? Let them tell us frankly and explicitly what they wish us to do. Are any of them actuated by a desire to have the College placed under the control of some party, to which they belong; and if they are so, does not this fact alone render all their complaints somewhat suspicious? Are any of them among those over-zealous champions, who, stepping beyond what moderate and candid men of any party would approve, have been concerned in calling secret meetings for the purpose of pledging themselves to each other to use all their influence, to prevent those parents who might otherwise do so, from sending their sons to Harvard University? Or are they among those, who are constantly endeavoring to accomplish the same object, by proclaiming, wherever they can make themselves heard, that every father who sends his son there, puts at hazard his salvation, and that of all his posterity? And shall these same men, (if indeed they are the same,) as soon as their unremitted, universal, and organised efforts, have been attended with some small success; so small as to be perceptible only to themselves, shall these same men turn round on the College and condemn it for the consequences of their own proceedings? Is this fair, or reasonable? I cheerfully leave this question to the good sense of the People of Massachusetts. If their complaint be sin-

cere, and not a mere pretext ; if they really desire to have the number of students in Harvard increased, they certainly have adopted a most extraordinary mode for the accomplishment of their object. When did ever the friends of Harvard, attempt by secret cabals or open clamors, to deter parents from sending their sons to any other Institution, which they might prefer ? If they had done so, Harvard would have disowned them. And after all, how much truth is there in the assertion ? There are more students in Cambridge, I believe, than in any other College but Yale ; and let it be considered how many are induced to go to Yale by the great amount of charitable assistance received there from the society for theological education, and from other funds. Last year *one hundred and forty-four* undergraduates received charitable aid in Yale, and only *thirty-four* in Harvard ; and this aid was probably necessary for their education in each. We are told that some Colleges attract more students from other States than Harvard. This is true. But she attracts many more students from her own State, than any other Institution from the State to which it belongs. Which is the greater praise ?

But the expenses of a student in Cambridge it is said, are unreasonably great. That they are greater than in some other Institutions, I readily admit. But this difference results from the nature of things, and not from any fault of the College. These expenses are of two kinds ; the expenses of living, and the expenses of education. As far as the first are concerned, there are Colleges in country towns no doubt,

where rent and fuel and food are cheaper than in Cambridge ; and I am glad of it, because it enables those parents, who cannot afford to have their children educated so near the Capital, to give them a better education, than they could do, if these Colleges did not exist. But then all these things are cheaper in the College here, than any where else near it, and this by the exertions, and at the expense of the College Government. Thus, for instance, they let their rooms at less than one half the sum, which a similar room costs *out* of College. So by providing dining halls and kitchens and furniture, at the expense of the College, the cost of board to the students is reduced, much below what is paid for it in the neighbourhood, and lower than it could be otherwise supplied. It is one dollar and seventy-five cents per week. If it can be had in Amherst for less, we may rejoice in their good fortune, but we cannot share it. The young men studying in Cambridge, cannot at the same time board in Amherst. So of wood. It is bought in the cheapest season, in large quantities by the Institution, and dealt out to the students as they want it, without profit. No doubt, it is cheaper in the country. But what then ? The students must have fires, and while they are studying in one town, they cannot keep their fires in another.

As to the expenses of education itself, including the books necessary for it, they are less in Cambridge than they can be in any other part of New England. With regard to the books, this is obvious. They are purchased in large quantities, at the lowest rates at which they can be obtained even by booksellers ;

many are brought from Europe, because they may be bought there cheaper than in America ; and they are sold to the students, like the wood, without profit. Now it is impossible that these books can be sold so cheap in any country town, as in Cambridge ; for the bookseller in the country can get none of them cheaper than the Cambridge student, and for all the foreign books, and many others, he must pay more. And let him be as moderate as he will, he must charge on them some profit beyond the cost to him, or how is he to support himself and his family ? The assertion, therefore, that text-books are cheaper in any country town than in Cambridge, cannot be true, unless in relation to some particular work printed near that place, which must be a small matter, and must be much more than counterbalanced by the far greater number, printed in and near Cambridge. It may be true, that the scholar in the country town, pays less in the year for his books, but it does not follow that his books are cheaper. If he pays two dollars in a year for two books, and the student in Cambridge pays four dollars for eight books, each of equal value, the former pays only half as *much* for his books, but he pays twice as *dear*. If, indeed, any of the Cambridge books are not worth having, or not worth the cost, or not worth as much as the books used elsewhere, the case might be different, but I know no reason for making any such conjecture. Let me add, that no student is compelled to buy either his fuel or his books from the College, but if he can get them, or any of them, cheaper in any other manner, he has the right to do so.

So it is with instruction. There may be less money paid for it by students elsewhere, than in Cambridge, but they do not get so much of it in proportion to the cost; and therefore it is not so cheap. But some persons would not have so many books and so much instruction. Very well! Then they do not want a whole education, but only half an one. They do not want our article. No doubt they can get half an one cheaper; but we have not got it to sell.

Enormous sums have sometimes been stated as the actual amount of a student's expenses in Cambridge; perhaps truly stated. But there is no limit to the amount which a young man may contrive to throw away, if his friends will let him, and this is equally true in all places. The *necessary* expenses of a student at Harvard, including every thing but clothing, do not exceed *two hundred and ten* dollars a year. If he is allowed to spend thousands, this is no fault of the College, but an injury done to it, by him and his friends; and it is not they who have the right to complain, but the College Government.

It has been made a subject of complaint, that the College does not now expend its whole income. Last year it is said to have received above eleven thousand dollars more than it spent. But take a series of five or ten years, and it will be found to have laid up little or nothing. Some time ago, there were spent for many successive years, several thousand dollars more than the whole income. Losses will occur in adverse times, and if they are not made up in prosperity, their accumulation through a long series of years would be

ruin. The enemies of the College might be pleased with this, but it could hardly gratify its friends. Besides, the capital must gradually increase, to counterbalance the diminution of income, arising from the gradual decrease in the rate of interest, which seems to take place in every flourishing country. For the last three or four years, too, we have lost nothing by bad debts, and no wisdom or vigilance, can render this good fortune perpetual. And, moreover, let the buildings be kept in as good repair as possible, they will not last forever. The roofs, the floors, the very walls, must be in time renewed, and something ought to be reserved for this purpose, and something also to improve and extend the Institution. And if three or four thousand dollars a year, were laid up, for these objects, which is more, I believe, than ever has been done for five years in succession, should we be doing as much in this particular for posterity, as our fathers did for us? Should we be doing even enough to keep up the state of education in the College, to the increasing demands of the country?

It is asserted, that the funds from which this income is derived, were given by the State, in order to make education cheaper, and that all that income, therefore, ought to be applied to this object. But how does it appear that they were given by the State? Individuals have given money too, and a great deal of it. The assertion assumes, that their money has been expended, and that the money remaining is that given by the State. But may not the fact be otherwise? Nearly all of the grants to the College by the State, were

made for specific objects, and the money given, was expended on those objects. Even of the last grant of 1814, one quarter part was expressly given for the benefit of poor but promising students, and was so applied ; nearly another quarter was designed and appropriated for building the Medical College ; and more than the whole residue was expended in building University Hall. This seems to me, however, of comparatively little consequence, since neither the State nor individuals, gave their money for the sole purpose of making education cheaper, but full as much, for that of making it better ; for that of building up an Institution which should go on constantly improving, to meet the expanding views, and supply the growing wants, and sustain the rising glories of our prosperous country. Shall it, on the contrary, stand still ? What would the best education, that could be obtained in New England a hundred years ago, be good for now ? And will not the best education of to-day, be deemed as insufficient a hundred years hence ? I trust that it will, Sir, and more so. The ultimate object of all these donations, was the public good. Making education cheap, is one mode of promoting that object, but not the only one. Let not all the funds then be applied to this alone. A great deal has been done in this way. Let us do something in the other also, and make it better. I will state a few of the measures, which have been adopted, to render education cheap here. It is estimated that the board, for which the student pays *one dollar and seventy-five cents* a week,

actually costs the College, taking all things into consideration, at least *two dollars and twenty-five cents*, so that each student who boards in Commons, receives half a dollar a week towards his board. It is not yet three years, since the charge to the students, for instruction, rent, &c., was reduced from ninety-seven dollars, to ninety dollars a year ; and, before making any further reduction, it is best to have a little more experience of our ability to bear this.

This sum of ninety dollars, may be thus apportioned ; *forty-eight* for instruction, not half what is paid in the best schools in this vicinity ; *twelve* for rent of room ; *six* for heating and keeping in order the lecture rooms, and other public apartments, used by undergraduates ; *twelve* for the Steward, Commons, Catalogues, and Commencement dinners ; *three* for the Librarian, and for keeping the Library of thirty-five thousand volumes in order ; *three* for cleaning and taking care of the student's rooms ; and *six* for general repairs. Of the moderateness of the charge for rent, I have already spoken. For every one of the other charges, the College pays more than it receives from the students. I will not trouble you with the details of them all. The charge for instruction is much the most important. Now the College pays exclusively of the Law School, Medical School and Divinity School, for the President, Professors, and other officers engaged in the instruction and discipline of undergraduates, about *twenty-two thousand dollars*. From two hundred and fifty students it receives *forty-eight dollars* each, making *twelve thousand*. The

friends of the students, therefore, certainly cannot complain. They get now, a great deal more than they pay for. In addition to what they gain in their board, fuel and books, they get for ninety dollars a year, an education which costs one hundred and fifty, and which they could not purchase in any other part of this country for any sum. When so much of the price of their education is given to them, why should they claim still more?

The money, when any is happily saved, is not kept by the College Government, to be divided among themselves, but to be spent in the manner most useful to the public. There is no difficulty in spending the money well; the difficulty is to get it, and to get enough of it to accomplish some great and useful purpose. If this shall ever be done, and it shall be applied to some purpose perfectly unobjectionable, will not the College be condemned for spending what they are now condemned for saving? I hope not, Sir, but I fear it. How it will be spent I know not, but it might be spent in many ways; in building an Observatory, and buying instruments to put into it; or a Library, and books to fill it; or in founding Professorships, that are already much wanted. But let us see whether the greater part of this sum of *eleven thousand dollars*, which we are supposed to have laid up this year, is not, after all, in danger of being expended before the year is out. *Two thousand dollars* of it, come from the Law School, and must, therefore, rightfully be expended on the Law School; so that this sum is at once to be

taken out of the account of what relates to the undergraduates. *Five thousand* are appropriated to the Library, which has been long grossly deficient in important books, and is so still. A Professor of Latin has been appointed with a salary of *twelve hundred dollars* a year ; nearly *one thousand dollars* are paid for additional instruction in Elocution ; about *eight hundred* have been applied to enable the Professor of Anatomy to give instruction to the undergraduates in his department by models ; and the place of another Professor, absent by leave on account of sickness, is of course supplied at the expense of the College. All these expenses will certainly leave no very large sum to be laid up for any general objects, however important. Indeed, it may be feared, that even this year, our income will be hardly sufficient to meet the demands on it.

Sir, I have just now mentioned buying books as one fit mode of spending the College funds. There is nothing which has been so much complained of as our appropriating so much money to the Library. There is nothing, which I am more ready to defend. The Library, great as it is, is still deficient, very deficient in every department. Few of the Professors, I believe, can find in it the books necessary to enable them to perform their duties to the College.

It has been stated, that till within three or four years, nothing has been appropriated to the Library from the general funds of the College since the American Revolution. When, therefore, we are asked, ‘ why spend the enormous sum of five thousand dol-

lars in one year upon the Library? Why not rather two thousand?' I ask, in turn, why not rather twenty thousand? The only answer I can give to my own question is, that I thought five thousand the most we could appropriate to that object, with a due regard to all the other interests of the Institution. If the books bought are all good books, selected so as to be best adapted to our present and most pressing wants, highly and permanently useful, and cheap in proportion to their real value, I can hardly find any other limit than our means, to my willingness to buy them. There is no department in the Library at all to be compared in extent to that, which contains the works relating to America, but even this is not complete. I had not been in London three weeks last summer, before I bought for the College, with their money, but not without authority, (our enemies are suspicious,) four hundred volumes, all relating to America, not one of them before in the Library, and many not in the country. One of these was the best book on Geography that existed in the time of Columbus, showing exactly what was his starting point, what tools he had to work with, and of course how much was due to his own great genius. Happening a few days after it was sent to America, to mention my good fortune in finding it, to Washington Irving, he told me that Columbus's own copy of it still existed in Spain, full of notes in his own and his brother Bartholomew's handwriting, and that if I could find another copy he would have a *fac-simile* made in it of all those notes, which he stated to be highly interesting, and to contain some

facts not known to the world. Of course, for so interesting a purpose, I ordered a copy to be procured, if possible, by any labor, or at any price. But after the most diligent search, it was impossible to find one in London, Paris, or Madrid. This result proved its value, and the lovers of Dollars and Cents may be gratified to learn that the College can sell it to-morrow for ten times what it cost them.

But it has been gravely and repeatedly said, ‘what need of more books? You have more books now than any body wants to read.’ That is true; but not more than *every* body wants to read, or to consult, or to refer to. A man does not go into a Library to read the volumes in order as they stand on the shelves, or to count them. He goes there to find all the good books that have ever been written on the subject on which his mind is then engaged. To find exactly what he wants, exactly when he wants it, may save him the labor of a life, or make that life a blessing to mankind. Give to Dr. Bowditch thirty thousand volumes, and it would not compensate him or the public for the loss to him of his one *La Place*. In a country where any value is attached to science or to letters, there ought to be at least one great library containing the means of excitement and improvement for talents of every kind, food for all tastes, weapons for every hand; and wherever that Library shall be, there will be the centre of instruction for the whole country; there will be the great establishment for education. Moreover, nothing will tend so effectually to build up such an establishment and attract to it efficient teach-

ers, as a Library equal to their wants; and we must not be content to have only books that will be constantly used, and neglect to obtain those above the common reach.

Let me suppose, or rather let me state, for I believe it is a fact, that a most accomplished Professor wishes a particular edition of a book, which is not to be found in the country, and desires us to send for it, to enable him to explain to his pupils more fully the meaning of the author he is required to teach them, the charm of his sentiments, and the graces of his style. It is one of those classic writers, who have been regarded for more than two thousand years with admiration and delight by every man of cultivated intellect, and refined taste; who have been his teachers in youth, his models perhaps in manhood and his comforters in age, his companions at home, his guides abroad, shedding light on every path and breathing consolation in every sorrow. Will it be a sufficient answer to tell him, that though we have not the book he wants, we have a great many that he does not want, and more than he can read, and bid him study them? If the only use of books were to teach us our letters, the argument would be a good one. Any book would do for that. But it cannot be listened to for a moment, by any one, who ever entered a library for the purpose of instruction to himself or benefit to others.

The clamors against all classical learning, which have been so current among us within a few years, have also been pressed into the service of the enemies

of Harvard. The cause of ancient learning has been so ably defended, that I need say little on this head. To the question what advantage is there in making use of Greek and Latin sentences, when addressing those who cannot understand them? I answer, none at all, and nobody does it now-a-days that knows any better. It was fashionable once, but it would be fantastic now. It is in vain to talk of the beauties of the ancients to those who will not look at them, and could not see them if they did, and yet will condemn them; though, since they have no means of forming any judgment whatever, they have no right to pronounce any.

But if any young man, having some slight acquaintance with the classics, should doubt whether there be any practical advantage in cultivating it, let him make a few experiments of this kind, and then judge for himself. Let him select some striking passage in one of the ancient authors, no matter what passage; let him take if he please, that gem of ancient eloquence, the Funeral Oration, in the second book of Thucydides, and let him translate it into English as well as he can; and then let him look at his work, and what will he see? If he has any taste or feeling, or any perception of eloquence, what will he see? His version shall be as good as you please, with the exact form and features of the original, and every shade and line; but where is the graceful movement, the life, the inspiration? Let him turn it over and over to find out the reason of the difference, and try to mend it at intervals, and by and by he will find, that though he has nothing like the origi-

nal, he has something much better than his own first sketch. After all, to be sure, he has only a translation; nothing of what is called practically useful; nothing he can go to town-meeting and repeat. But after a little practice in this way, he will perceive that he has acquired the ability to express every thing he has to say, more promptly and effectively, and this faculty he can carry to town-meeting, or anywhere else. And are not frequent and successful attempts to imitate good models, the best means of improvement in every pursuit? It is difficult indeed; but it is always more difficult to learn an art, than to apply it.

This is mentioned, however, only as an experiment and exercise for youth. The true way to study an ancient author is to abandon ourselves to him entirely, and let him bear us along with his current. We shall thus unconsciously imbibe some of his qualities, and acquire without effort, nay, with delight, greater advantage than the student can gain by the laborious process just mentioned. We may thus learn from our model not only to speak, but to think and to feel; may gain not merely facility of expression, but a portion of the spirit of his eloquence; and catch something of the freedom and dignity of his action, instead of a scrap of his mantle. This is the way to use the ancients, and the way to make the moderns.

But why not take for models our best English writers? Because they are not so good models. Who compares our Statues with the Venus or the Apollo; or our Churches with the Parthenon? And in the art of writing, the difference between the ancients and the

moderns is greater than in any other art. It is asking no great concession to be permitted to assert, that people, in general, are most struck with what is most striking. Now, who will deny, that in the finest of the ancient writers, the beauties are most striking, and the faults hardly perceptible? And who will assert it of our own? In simplicity and precision of thought, concentration of feeling, and that happiness of arrangement and connexion, which make a work one compact and harmonious whole, instead of a collection of disjointed parts, we cannot pretend to be their rivals. If we should learn nothing from them but brevity, it would be a lesson well worth the labor. Many of the most perfect orations, which have come down to us from antiquity, may be spoken in less than an hour, and I doubt whether there is one, that would require two hours for its delivery. We ourselves have had a practical lesson about choosing modern models, which ought to last at least for a century. The favorite model of the last generation, and a good part of this, was Doctor Samuel Johnson, and every body's thoughts were to be clad in his language. A great man no doubt, one of the greatest in modern times, and so much the better for my argument; but his style was fit for nobody but himself. When all the world would imitate him, what was the consequence? An accumulation of sonorous epithets, instead of simplicity, precision, and force; and pages to express what might be said better in a single sentence.

It has been objected to the College, with our other literary Institutions, that education there is not suffi-

ciently practical. Men ought to be educated, it is said, for the business of life, and their minds ought to be filled with the knowledge of facts and principles. This is enough. They will find out for themselves the way to communicate them. He who can think well, we are told, will speak well. This is not always true. He who cannot think well, to be sure, cannot speak well; and it is best for him to be silent and to mind his work. But he who can think well and does think well, will he not speak all the better for knowing how to speak too? The giant should not despise his armour. Sampson himself would have done better with a sword; and we, who are not Sampsons, cannot safely rely upon his weapon. Franklin possessed natural powers enough, one would think, to satisfy any body; and he must have been conscious of his strength. But he chose to fight with weapons, and he went to work to make them. He, to be sure, took a modern for his model, not having access to the ancients; but he was a man to succeed under every disadvantage. He tells us himself, how he toiled for years to form his style. It cost him more labor to make it, than ever it did to use it. But was it not worth making? What a weapon! Polished, keen, effective; making every blow tell; every touch electric.

The other charges against the College, I believe all relate to Theological subjects. First, with regard to the Hollis Professor, it is said, that the Statutes of the Founder are violated, in allowing that Office to be holden by one, who does not profess to believe in

the Trinity. It is alleged, that Mr. Hollis was a Trinitarian. But cannot a Trinitarian found a Professorship, to which those, who differ from him in sentiment, may be eligible? He was also a Christian, and may he not have thought it more important to promote Christianity in its broadest sense, than any particular modification of it? Mr. Hollis was a Baptist, but he does not require that his Professor shall belong to the same sect. The question is not what were his own religious sentiments, but what he meant to require of his Professor, or rather what he has in fact required. The provision usually cited in this controversy is the following Statute;

‘XI. That the person chosen from time to time to be a Professor, be a man of solid learning in Divinity, of sound or orthodox principles, one who is well gifted to teach, of a sober and pious life, and of a good conversation.’

There is another passage, however, which seems to me not less important; ‘The Plan or Form for the Professor of Divinity to agree to at his inauguration.’

‘That he repeat his Oaths to the Civil Government; that he declare it as his belief that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only perfect rule of faith and manners; and that he promise to explain and open the Scriptures to his pupils with integrity and faithfulness, according to the best light that God shall give him. That he promise to promote true piety and Godliness by his example and instruction; that he consult the good of the College and the peace of the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ on all occasions; and that he religiously observe the Statutes of the Founder, and all such other Statutes and Orders as shall be made by the College not repugnant thereunto.’

Let me call your particular attention, Sir, to the manner in which he is to explain the Scriptures. It is not according to the light, which was given to Luther or to Calvin, nor according to the light given to the Founder, nor even according to the light given to the Professor himself, at the time of his election, but ‘according to the best light that God *shall* give him ;’ that is, of course, at any time. Now, supposing the Scriptures interpreted according to the best light given to the Professor, either when chosen or at any subsequent period, should be opposed to the Trinity, is he not here most expressly commanded to explain them according to his light ? But he is also commanded to be sound or orthodox, and if Hollis by this meant Trinitarian, then he must at the same time, support the Trinity. How shall we reconcile this contradiction ? Is it not possible that Mr. Hollis might have thought Orthodoxy to be a belief in the Scriptures exactly as they are written, allowing each man to interpret them according to the best light, which shall be given to him, whatever colour that light may put on them. Might he not have believed in the Trinity himself, without condemning those, who sincerely differed from him on this point ; and without deciding it to be so absolutely essential, that all, who doubt it, must inevitably perish ? Is not this possible ? And if so, will not the supposition reconcile this seeming contradiction, and make all his directions plain, intelligible and consistent ? If this question be answered in the affirmative, all doubt is ended ; for surely common sense and common reason, require us to put such construction on every part

of an instrument, as may make the whole of it consistent with itself.

Some events, which occurred in the life of Mr. Hollis, may throw light upon this matter. In the year 1718, a few dissenting Clergymen at Exeter and other places, in the west of England, having preached sentiments which savoured of some doubt in the Trinity, were examined by their parishioners, for the purpose of ascertaining their opinions in relation to that doctrine ; and when it appeared that they disbelieved it, were dismissed from their offices. This led to further inquiries of the same nature, and producing the same results, and finally to a controversy, which agitated the whole body of the English Dissenters. At length, a meeting of the Dissenting Clergy, in and near London, was called to be holden at Salter's Hall, in that city, to consider of advices to be sent to their brethren in the West. Shortly before the time appointed for this meeting, a Committee of gentlemen, belonging to the three denominations of Dissenters, (of which Mr. Barrington, afterwards Lord Barrington, was Chairman, and Mr. Hollis, himself, was a member,) prepared "a paper of advices," with the design of healing the breaches, that had been made, and promoting charity and forbearance ; which paper they recommended to this meeting of the Clergy, for their adoption. Its great object was, to disapprove the setting up any form of men's invention, in matters of faith ; or any other test, than that unerring form of sound words, the Holy Scriptures. The Clergy met, and one of them proposed amending this "paper of advices," by in-

serting a declaration of their own belief in the Trinity, so that they might not be suspected of indifference to the truth. This proposition was rejected, by a vote of *fifty-seven*, against *fifty-three*. It was then proposed, that, before acting on the advices, they should voluntarily sign a declaration, of their belief in the Trinity, simply to prevent the fact from being doubted. This was resisted, on the ground, that any such statement, would seem to warrant the claim of a similar statement from others, since the number and respectability of the meeting would of itself, confer some authority on their declaration, and give it the effect of a Creed or Test. Upon this question, whether any such declaration of their own belief, should be made or not, the meeting separated into two parties, and a controversy arose, which raged for some time all over England, gave rise to a multitude of pamphlets, and ended, as such controversies usually end, in rendering both sides more violent, and more obstinate in their respective opinions.

Meanwhile, the two parties met in different places. One made its declaration of belief in the Trinity, and then sent its address, recommending peace and moderation. The other, refusing to declare any belief at all, sent an address, insisting that the Holy Scriptures themselves, are the only rule of faith. The latter, though most of them as good Trinitarians as ever lived, had their names published in what was called "THE BLACK LIST—a list of the names, of those Dissenting Ministers, who refused to subscribe the declaration for the Blessed Trinity." Mr. Hollis' opinion on this

subject, is apparent from one of his letters, dated March 1, 1721.

‘I believe all the gentlemen concerned in signing the letter, of whom I was one of the meanest in character, were very far from any plot against the honour of our Lord Jesus, whom we believe God over all, blessed forever. But if it must be called a plot, it was to restrain a few over heated zealots from too rash censuring their brethren ; and to look back, I think had there not been a majority against subscribing the roll at Salter’s Hall, at that time, such a Test would have run through all the Churches in England, by this time, which would have endangered many schisms, and silenced many useful preachers, and I rejoice their plot did not succeed.’

Another letter from Mr. Hollis to a friend in New-England, dated August 13, 1722, after mentioning a pamphlet, which he had received from R. I. Morris, then a teacher in the College, proceeds thus :

‘I wish you, Sir, to instruct him a little further in the christian doctrine of more extensive charity, and not (to) judge too hastily of his neighbour, and exclude from salvation every one, that differs from him in explication and belief of the article of the Trinity ; a glorious truth it is, but the manner of explaining it appears difficult, so difficult, that scarce two can say exactly alike, except they agree on a form, and agree to write after it.’

In the History of the Dissenting Churches, by Walter Wilson, a decided Trinitarian, the paper of advices signed by Lord Barrington and Mr. Hollis, is thus spoken of :

‘In the mean time, a paper of advices was drawn up with the professed design of healing the breaches, that had been made, and promoting charity and mutual forbearance, but the real motive was to screen the ministers at Exeter.’\*

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\* Vol. III. p. 517.

If this remark is intended to insinuate that those, who signed that paper, desired to screen the Exeter Ministers on private or personal grounds, or had any other motive than that, which they professed, it is not candid nor just. But if it only means, that their object was to heal the breaches, that had been made, and promote charity and mutual forbearance, by preventing Clergymen in Exeter and elsewhere, from being turned out of office, or from being censured or questioned, for disbelief of the Trinity, the remark is undoubtedly correct. It is most manifest, that this was the precise object of Mr. Hollis and his friends. Is it not utterly incredible then, that those, who at this day, desire to have any man turned out of his office or compelled to resign it, or subjected to censure or scrutiny, on account of his disbelief of the Trinity, should pretend to shelter themselves under the authority of Hollis—whose example is their condemnation? The declaration above cited, and especially that clause of it, which states *the Scriptures to be the only perfect rule of faith and manners*, as well as the Statutes themselves, were evidently drawn up with a full recollection of this controversy, and of the letter of advices recommended to the Clergy.

There is a document in the College, dated August 2, 1721, and entitled ‘Rules and Orders relating to a Divinity Professor, in Harvard College, New England, drawn up at the request of Mr. Thomas Hollis, and unanimously recommended by us, as necessary to answer his useful design.’ It is signed by seven Clergymen, and agrees in every thing material to this dis-

cussion, with the statutes adopted by Mr. Hollis, in establishing his Professorship, which statutes bear date January 10, 1722. The form of the Declaration was added afterwards. Of these seven Clergymen, one signed the declaration of belief in the Trinity, at Salter's Hall; one refused to join either party in that controversy, and *five* are on the BLACK LIST. Now is it possible to believe, that Hollis and his friends on the BLACK LIST, meant to require his Professor to submit to a *Test*, and formally to declare his belief in the Trinity?—the very thing they had been contending against so strenuously. He is to declare, that he will observe the statutes, and therefore be sound or orthodox; and this, we are told, they meant for a declaration of belief in the Trinity. He is to declare at the same time, that he believes *the Scriptures to be the only perfect rule of faith and manners*, and promise that he will open them to his pupils, with integrity and faithfulness, *according to the best light that God shall give him*. This was the doctrine of the opposite party, in the great struggle then hardly ended; and if these two things can stand together in the same Instrument, it is a pity, that the discovery was not made in season to reconcile the disputants, or to prevent their rupture. But if Hollis thought it sound and orthodox, to believe in the Scriptures, as interpreted by the conscience of each believer for himself, then his direction how to explain and open them, is not a contradiction of the soundness or orthodoxy which he requires, but an explanation of it. Is it not manifest that this was his opinion?

And was he not right? Is not this true orthodoxy, and every thing else sectarianism? What is the use of a creed? Do not the words of Scripture, express the meaning of Scripture better than any others can? Are not the exact words of every written instrument the best evidence, and in law, the only admissible evidence of its meaning? It is said that a man must assent to something, in order to show that he is a Christian. Why not offer him the Scriptures? It takes no longer time to assent to a long instrument, than to a short one, if it has been read and considered beforehand. But then different people interpret the Scriptures differently, and creeds are made to prevent this. That is the very thing, which no man has a right to prevent; for to do so, is preventing freedom of conscience. We are told, however, that every man must have a creed, that what he believes, is his creed, and that to state it, is only stating his opinions. If this were indeed true, if a creed were nothing but an exposition of what is believed by him who makes it, no reasonable man could object to it. But it is not so. It is an *authoritative* statement of opinion, and purports to set forth, not simply what a man in fact believes, but what he *ought* to believe. This difference, though slight in form, is mighty in effect, and inveterate enough in its venom, to poison the whole fountain of Charity.

There is precisely the same difference, between an opinion and a creed, that there is between the argument of Counsel, and the decision of the Court. The Counsel sets forth his opinion of the law,

with his reasons and authorities to support it; but when he has said all, he has said nothing binding on others, or even on himself, or which any body ought to obey. But when the Court gives its opinion of the law, this binds itself, and all the world within its jurisdiction, and every body must obey it. It is true, that a Creed is not said to derive its force from the authority of its framers, but from the fact of its expressing the true sense of the Scriptures. But whether it does express the true sense of the Scriptures or not, is the very question at issue. It says *authoritatively* that it does; and that all men ought to find the same sense in them. And this is exactly what no human authority has any right to say. In stating that creeds assume authority, I do not mean that they claim, at the present day, the authority of Civil Power, but they do claim the authority of Truth, which is that of commanding assent.

The advocates of creeds in our age, admit, indeed, that the religious sentiments of an individual ought not to be controlled by the authority of the State, or by any society, *to which he has not voluntarily attached himself*. But in this exception lies all the evil. A man has no right, however voluntarily, to transfer to others the power of dictating his faith; and others have no right to accept that power. It is not merely freedom from the unjust exercise of civil authority, that is to be maintained; but freedom of opinion from the authority of opinion, and the man who surrenders this, surrenders his liberty. Any association of men, therefore, for the purpose of applying a particular human

creed as the rule or measure of faith, though it be only of their own faith, is an association for a bad purpose. These remarks are not applicable to the articles of the Church of England, if understood, as Dr. Paley understands them, to be articles of peace. They would present a very different question, which it is not my design now to consider. But it is urged, ‘How can two walk together unless they are agreed?’ They cannot, unless they are agreed upon their path; but they may disagree about other things. Let the path be the Scripture in the words of the Scripture, and all men may walk in it together in charity and peace. Without doubt, every man may endeavor to propagate his own religious sentiments by reason, argument, and persuasion, and especially by showing in his own conduct, that they are productive of all the virtues, including *charity*; but this does not give him authority to condemn the sentiments of others. He may allege, that they do not accord with his belief and his convictions, but he has no jurisdiction to decide, that they are repugnant to the Scriptures. Let no one suppose, however, that his belief is a matter of indifference, and that he may choose what faith he pleases. The only opinion, which any man can innocently hold on any important religious question, is that, which he finds after faithful and diligent search, by his own light, to have the sanction of the Scriptures.

But it has been asked, if I really believe that certain doctrines are *essential* to Christianity, may I not assert this? I answer, certainly, you may assert that you *believe* them essential, for that is an opinion;

but not decide that they *are* essential, for that is a judgment. I would ask these inquirers in turn, what they think of him, who interpreting the Scriptures according to his best light, considers the same doctrines unessential? If they reply that he is right, they are orthodox; if they say that he is wrong, they are sectarians. They are not asked to pronounce their own opinions erroneous. Their opinions are right for them, and his opinions right for him. But they cannot claim to determine what is right in the abstract, independently of him or themselves; for whatever is right in the abstract, however determined, is binding upon all men, and of course they have no right to decide it. Their argument is tantamount to this, ‘I sincerely believe, that I have a right to control the consciences of men, and therefore I will assert it, and act accordingly, for it is a violation of my Christian liberty, to prevent my acting according to my belief.’ This needs no refutation. In the narrow little court of his own conscience, every individual is Supreme Judge. The Theologians on all sides, may argue the cause before him, and set forth their opinions, their reasons and authorities. But after all, he must decide for himself; and if he has any regard for his rights or his liberty, he will let no one of them all usurp his power. This is the only true orthodoxy, and I entertain no doubt, that it was the orthodoxy of Thomas Hollis.

But it is further objected, that a part of the Professor’s salary is paid from the College funds. Now how can this be otherwise? Since a century ago, the

College made a contract, that for the payment of a certain sum of money, they would support such a Professor for ever. If the interest of the sum thus paid is sufficient for his support, it is very well ; but if not, the College must make up the difference, or violate the contract. This always has been the case, and always must be so, until we shall be willing to infringe the obligation, or unable to fulfil it. Would it be fair or just to take funds, given to us at the present day for the extension and improvement of the Theological Department, and apply them, not to this purpose, but to that of relieving ourselves from the burden of an obligation contracted by our own voluntary act, in the last century ?

But there is a Theological School connected with the College, and this school is said to be sectarian. In what University of New England is not 'Theology taught ? The College has always held funds, to aid graduates in pursuing this study ; or at least for more than a century ; and the Hollis Professor was always bound to give them instruction. In the year 1816, a large sum was raised by subscription, to improve the education in this Department. Nobody at that time, suggested the idea of abolishing it. If it was worth having, it was worth improving ; and the money was accepted. It was to be appropriated to the use for which it was given, by a Joint Board composed of the Corporation and of five trustees, chosen by a Society, consisting of the contributors to the fund. About eight years afterwards, another sum was raised by subscription, to erect a building, for the use of the students in

that Institution, and was so appropriated. At the same time, it was agreed, that the Society of Contributors to the Theological Fund, should appoint a Board of Directors, who should regulate and oversee the Theological Seminary, under the obligation, of course, to submit all their proceedings, according to the Constitution of the College, to the revision of the President and Fellows, who are responsible to the Overseers and to the Public, for the management of every part of the Institution, and cannot get rid of that responsibility if they would. In this state, things continued till last year, when the Trustees and Directors, entertaining the opinion, that the public interest did not require them to serve the College, in that capacity any longer, communicated this opinion to the College Government. What could be done or said? They had served the Public seven years, gratuitously, zealously, ably, successfully; and how could they be compelled to serve it longer? All that could be said, was, that we were grateful for their services; and if any other eight gentlemen will undertake the same labor, for the relief and assistance of the College Government, it will no doubt be equally grateful to them for their exertions.

Last year one of the Professors in the Theological School resigned his office, and another was appointed in his place. This opportunity was taken to alter the Statutes or Regulations of the Department, and the new Statutes were the subject of the discussion last winter in the Board of Overseers. They had no other object or effect than to determine the duties of the different members of the Theological Faculty

within the Department itself, and to empower that Faculty to regulate the Seminary under the control of the Corporation; except in providing, that the duty of performing the usual services in the College Chapel should now be assigned to the three Professors, and not as formerly to the Senior Professor alone. The President is named head of the Theological Faculty; but so he was in the original Statutes, for which these were substituted. He was always head of this, as well as of the Faculties of Law and of Medicine, and of every other Department of the College, for the plain reason, that it is his peculiar and appropriate duty to see that the laws are executed in them all.

But the College Government has sometimes been blamed not for what it has done, but for what it has omitted to do; for not separating the Theological Institution entirely from the College. Sir, I entered the Corporation with the strongest conviction, that this object was most important and desirable, perceiving how much prejudice against the College was caused by the union with it of the Theological Seminary, and I sat down with a serious design to devise the means of accomplishing it. But a difficulty met me in the outset, which I never could surmount, and which still seems to me insuperable. The funds were all expressly given and solemnly accepted for the purpose of promoting Theological education *in* Harvard University. Not a dollar of them could be appropriated otherwise consistently with the will of the donors, who are so numerous, that it would be quite impossible to

procure their assent to a change of the appropriation ; and many of whom, indeed, are dead. It may have been unwise to contract this engagement. But since it is contracted, neither wisdom nor honesty will permit its violation. All that can be done, since the Department must exist in the College, is to take care that it be Orthodox, according to Hollis ; that the teachers, while maintaining their own opinions, whatever they may be, which it is clearly their right and their duty to do, shall maintain them as arguments, not as decrees ; as opinions, not as a creed having authority. I hope that they will do so, and will state fairly to their pupils the tenets of other Christian sects, and inform them in what works these several tenets are most ably vindicated and maintained ; and tell them, after all, that none of these doctrines are obligatory, that none of them are even right for him, who does not find them according to his own light in the Scriptures. So I hope, and so I believe.

But it has been asked, why not put a fair proportion of Trinitarians into this school, and let each doctrine be defended by its friends ? Sir, if there were a vacancy in that school and the man best qualified to fill it were a Trinitarian, provided that he were orthodox also, according to my understanding of orthodoxy, I would vote for him to-morrow. But if he would go there to maintain, that his opinions were right in the abstract, and of course binding, and those of his colleagues abstractly and essentially wrong, and therefore inadmissible and dangerous ; and to convert a Seminary, which ought to be a place of secluded and

diligent study, into an arena for Theological combats, I would not enable him to accomplish this design. The only Trinitarians, to whom I object as officers of the Theological Seminary, are those, who are not in this sense orthodox ; and to Unitarians not thus orthodox, I equally object.

The assertion, which has been made, that a portion of the money paid by undergraduates for their education, has been applied to the support of the Theological Seminary, is not correct. It has been already shown that the undergraduates do not pay nearly the whole expense of their own education, and that the deficiency in the salary of the Hollis Professor is made up from the funds of the College by virtue of the original contract. The whole amount paid to the other officers in that Department is thirty-five hundred dollars, while the net income of the funds belonging to it, including the amount of the annual contribution at the lowest rate yet received, and excluding the Hollis fund, is stated to me from official sources at thirty-eight hundred and ninety-six dollars.

It is objected that the preachers in the College Chapel are Unitarians. But then no student is required to hear them. Every one may attend any other church, which he or his parents prefer. Our adversaries themselves admit the existing law to be right in this respect ; but they still insist, that the old law allowing the privilege of attending another church to Episcopalians only, was most narrow and illiberal, and evinces the sectarian spirit in which the College Government is administered. This one word ‘ Epis-

copalian,' is detected and seized on, and without the least inquiry into the occasion or circumstances of its use, we are instantly condemned ; and all who are not Episcopalians are called on to resent the distinction as injurious to themselves. Now the real truth is, that when this law was passed, there were, as I am informed, only two places of public worship in the village of Cambridge ; one the church of Dr. Holmes, a good Trinitarian, at which the students regularly attended, and the other, the Episcopal church ; and the law allowing those, who did not like to attend Dr. Holmes, to attend the Episcopal church, granted all, that could be granted. The legislators did not think of enumerating all possible Christian sects, and providing, that whenever any one of them should erect a place of worship in Cambridge, the students might attend there. And this is what is called illiberality. Other churches are now erected, and the students are allowed to attend any, which they please. It is true, that the law was not altered, as soon as a new meeting-house was built ; but I am not aware, that any body asked for its alteration. There could hardly be a motive for it, since the practice was always more indulgent than the law. Any student might always apply to the President, and if he could satisfy him, that he had conscientious scruples, and was not merely capricious, might have those scruples gratified. It is not a great many years, since there was a Jew in Harvard College, who was expressly permitted to pass Saturday with friends of his own faith in Boston, and to abstain from all Christian ex-

ercises on the following day. Catholics have been there also, and they were allowed to attend the Catholic church in Boston, on Sundays, and on all other holydays, obligatory according to their religion, numerous as they are, and they were excused from any attendance in College on those days. I have heard of a Sandemanian, too, who was expressly permitted to worship no where, and to pass the Sabbath in his father's house, and all this under the old law. What can we do, or what can we say, to secure ourselves against such attacks as these?

But it is alleged, that the prayers are made by the Professors in Theology, and may pervert the minds of the pupils. Surely, no one in New-England can contend, that so large a family should not have any morning and evening prayers. It is true, that the Theological Professors pray; but who else should pray? And, after all, what is the objection to their prayers. The Rev. Dr. Codman, who is incapable of perverting the truth, for the benefit of any cause, states it distinctly thus; 'I do not pretend to say, that the officiating Professors will introduce subjects of controversy into their prayers; I believe them to be too wise, and too serious. But if consistent with themselves, they will certainly *omit* many things, which the children of the orthodox part of the community have been accustomed to hear from the lips of their pious parents, at the domestic altar.' Now, Sir, what is this charge? It is expressly admitted, that the prayers will contain no matter of controversy; nothing to startle the most timid conscience. But then they will *omit* some pe-

culiar doctrines. The objection is, not that they *contain* Sectarianism, but that they *omit* Sectarianism. That is the charge, that is the sin, and that is the truth.

It has also been asserted, that none but Unitarians are ever appointed to office, in Harvard College, and this assertion has been so often repeated without contradiction, that it seems to be taken for granted that it is true, and that men are appointed to office there *because* they are Unitarians. Let us, at last, inquire into the facts. On a recent occasion, when a gentleman whom the Corporation thought the best qualified for an office in their gift, was asked if he would accept it in case of his election ; he expressed his willingness to do so ; but thought it fair to inform the Corporation beforehand, (having, no doubt, heard all these reports about its Sectarianism,) that he was not a Unitarian but a Trinitarian. With this information the Board proceeded to the election, and he was chosen unanimously ; not for his Trinitarianism ; this had no influence one way or the other ; but on account of his fitness for the office.

Since I began this letter, Sir, I have taken a list of the College officers, and marked the names of all, who have been appointed within ten years ; selecting that period not with any reference to the result, but because I thought it long enough, and was persuaded that nobody will hold us responsible for the sins of our predecessors, generation before generation. There is but one member of the Corporation, who has been in it so long. I did not know to what religious sects

one half of the persons, whose names I noted down, belonged, but sent to Cambridge to obtain information on this point, and will now state to you the result of my inquiry. Among these names are those of four Professors, whose instructions are confined entirely to graduates, and who receive nothing from the College treasury, two in Law, and two in Divinity. The reasons for not putting Trinitarians into the Theological school, have been above considered, and besides one of these two Professors was appointed by the Founders of the Professorship themselves, who established the office only on condition, that the present incumbent should first hold it. The case is the same with one of the Professors of Law ; he was appointed by the Founder. The other was selected by the Corporation, and my informant tells me now, though I did not know it before, that he is a Unitarian. The only *permanent officers* having any connexion with the undergraduates, or receiving any pay from the treasury, who have been chosen within that period, are the President, whom I consider orthodox according to Hollis, though I do not mean to call him a Trinitarian ; and the following persons ; the Librarian, the Steward, the Janitor, the Professors of Chemistry, German, and Latin, three Tutors, the Instructors, in French, Italian, and Elocution, the Curator of the Botanical Garden, and assistant Steward, in all fourteen. Of these, I understand, that three are Catholics, that one is of the Evangelical reformed Lutheran Creed, one a Calvinist, one a Sandemanian, that one attends the Episcopal church, and one belongs to a family of

Quakers ; eight in the whole ; and I suppose these sects to be all Trinitarian. The other six, I am told, are Unitarians. Besides these, the two persons employed by the Treasurer and Secretary of the College to keep their books, receive compensation for their services. One of them is a Unitarian, and the other a Calvinist. The three or four Proctors usually there, are chosen from year to year, from among those graduates, who are residing in Cambridge, and pursuing the studies of their respective professions. It is said that one of those now there is a Calvinist. If they are in general Unitarians, which I presume to be the case, there is this plain reason for it. They are selected from among the graduates of Harvard, because these are best qualified for the office, and if the Calvinists of the day will not send their sons there, how can we choose them ? Let Calvinistic young men go to Cambridge to be educated, and distinguish themselves by their talents, and diligence, and good conduct, and they will be promoted to office according to their merits. Or if they are not, let them complain as loudly as they please.

With regard to the distribution of College honors and benefices among the students, there is not the slightest suspicion in this vicinity, among those who know any thing about the College, that it is influenced in any manner whatever by any party feeling, religious or political.\*

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\* The effect, which these benefices or allowances to poor students produce on the number of undergraduates, has already been alluded to, page 8, and is strikingly evinced in the history of the College. There

But not a little noise has been made about the Union of Church and State. The difficulty of answering this charge arises from that of comprehending its precise meaning. Does it mean that our Executive, Legislative or Judicial Departments control the decisions of any individual on religious subjects, or that any religious sect or party, controls the decisions of either of those departments on civil subjects? Can any man in his senses assert this? There was a time, when Church and State were united in Massachusetts, and it was the fault of the age, and not of the illustrious men who lived in it. But that time has gone by, and the Legislature will take good care that it shall not return, at least in this generation.

The main business of the College in that day, was to teach Theology, one particular modification of Theology. In this enlightened age, a public education embraces the whole circle of the sciences and the liberal arts, and Theology forms only a very small part of it. To let a jealousy, therefore, against the manner, in which this one branch is taught, extend itself to all the others, and give rise to reproaches against the whole Institution, is something less than candour and even than justice. There is no fear that the State will intermeddle with religious faith; and I

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were more students there in the ten years following 1813, than usual, and as the same objections were urged against the College then as now, the only reason that can be given for it, is that during that period, the State granted to the College twenty-five hundred dollars a year for the use of poor and meritorious students. When that grant ceased, the number of students became somewhat less, but there has not been at any time any gradual and continued declension in the number of the undergraduates, as the enemies of the College so frequently assert.

believe that the great majority of Christians among us, of every persuasion, and indeed, of every profession and pursuit, are fully satisfied, that the days of Ecclesiastical domination, whether over civil government or private conscience, are ended, and that all religious Instructors, who would maintain their proper dignity or influence, must be content to teach and cease to dictate.

But then it is objected, that the Executive and one Branch of the Legislature, form part of a Board of Overseers, for confirming or annulling the election of Officers of the College, and other proceedings of the Corporation. Now, one would think this must be a security against sectarianism, instead of an encouragement of it; unless these departments and the people, who choose them, are themselves sectarians. And is not something of the same kind done in relation to Amherst? Are not some of the Trustees of that Institution appointed by the two Branches of the Legislature; and this without objection?

These appeals to the people, however, against the influence of public officers, annually elected by the people themselves, are not likely to produce much effect; and it gives us some confidence in the goodness of our cause to find, that many of those, who are most zealous in accusing the College of Sectarianism, show what spirit they are of, by bringing the same charge against the Legislature and the Judiciary of the Commonwealth.

But the complaint urged against Harvard with the greatest zeal, and no doubt with the greatest sincerity,

is that it is *not orthodox* ; and this is probably the real difficulty. The College is condemned, not because it is in the hands of a Sect, but because it is not in the hands of *the right Sect*. While it was Orthodox, in the sense of those, who thus complain, all was just as it should be, and it was the duty and the privilege of the State to protect, and even to support it. But now, when it is supposed to be under the influence of a different Sect, now it is to be cut off and abandoned. Is not this calling on the State to treat different Sects in different manners, and introducing into religious subjects that very Civil Power, whose interference in them is professedly deprecated ? If it must be under the control of some Sect, as they allege it must, (though I know not why) it ought to be a matter of perfect indifference to the State, as a Civil Power, which Sect that is, and each Sect, as it happens to be in possession of it, ought to be equally protected.

The State, however, ought not to give funds, it is said, for the advancement of any one Religious party. To this, I heartily agree, and I presume that whatever the State shall give to the College, will be given in such a manner, that it cannot be applied to the Theological Department. But we are told, that even those funds, which have heretofore been given for the benefit of the undergraduates alone, *will* be applied, or *may* be applied, to the use of the graduates in this Department. No doubt, Sir, these, or any other funds *may* be misapplied, and used for purposes, to which they cannot rightfully be appropriated. But the possibility of abuses can never be prevented. That they

*will* be thus misapplied, is a strong assertion. If there is any reason for such an apprehension, it ought to excite the strictest vigilance. When they *are* so misapplied, or when there is any good ground for suspecting it, let the abuse be ascertained, corrected, and, if need be, punished by some competent legal tribunal. Let the Supreme Judicial Court take up the matter and decide it, as they decide other things, upon distinct charge, proof and conviction, but do not let us have sentence and execution without trial, hearing and judgment, according to law.

And now, Sir, having taken some notice of all the charges, which I have heard of against the College, without knowing the sources of many of them, I submit the charges and the answers to your candid judgment. Let those, who think of crushing that Institution, consider what it is. It is not the Officers, high or low ; these are but its servants. The Young Men are the Institution. Let its enemies go and look at them, and see if they have the heart to crush them. And if they have the heart, let them see if they have the power. No, Sir, they have it not. These are the ornaments of Harvard, her jewels and her pride. They are her support, also ; and they can support her, and will support her, and the People of Massachusetts will support them, and their cause therefore will assuredly triumph.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect,  
your most obedient servant,

F. C. GRAY.

*Boston, April 16, 1831.*





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Harvard  
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[Gray, Francis Calley]  
Letter to Governor Lincoln, in relation to  
Harvard university.

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